Amendments to the Claims

1-106. (Canceled)

107. **(Currently Amended)** A method comprising:

providing a plurality of sockets, wherein

      each socket has an associated connection and an associated security token**,**

          and

          the associated security token is provided by the associated connection;

receiving a first connection and a first security token;

creating a socket associated with the first connection, wherein

          the first connection has associated the first security token;

comparing the first security token with the associated security tokens;

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the

      first security token, **including the socket in the plurality of sockets**

      ~~creating a socket associated with the first connection and the first~~

      ~~security token~~.

108. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 107, wherein

a security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

109. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 107 further comprising:

in response to said comparing, if the first security token and a security token

      associated with one of the plurality of sockets match, coupling the first

      connection to the connection associated with the socket **associated with**

      the matching security token.

110. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim **107** ~~109~~ further comprising:

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the

      first security token,

      upon a determination that the first connection is not to be associated with a

          socket, disconnecting the first connection.

111. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109, wherein the coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:

    relaying a data stream between the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

112. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109, wherein the coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:

    creating a single connection comprising the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

113. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109 further comprising:

    decoupling the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

114. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 113, wherein the decoupling occurs upon one of failure and disconnect of one of the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

115. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109, wherein the first connection is transmitted through a first firewall program.

116. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 115, wherein the first connection is created by a protocol daemon.

117. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 116, wherein a second connection connects the protocol daemon to a first program, and the protocol daemon couples the first connection to the second connection.

118. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 117, wherein the protocol daemon relays a data stream between the first connection and the second connection.

119. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 118, wherein
the first program provides the first security token.

120. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:
creating a first connection to a first program;
receiving a first security token from the first program;
creating a second connection to a relay program;
providing the first security token to the relay program; and
upon successful creation of the second connection, coupling the first connection
      to the second connection.

121. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120, wherein
the second connection is transmitted through a firewall program.

122. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120 further comprising:
relaying a data stream between the first connection and the second connection.

123. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120, wherein
the first security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification
      string.

124. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120 further comprising:
terminating the first connection and the second connection.

125. (**Currently Amended**) The method of Claim 120, wherein
the relay program compares the first security token with one or more security
      tokens associated with one or more corresponding connections;
in response to said comparing, if the first security token and a security token
      associated with a corresponding connection match,
            coupling the second connection to the connection associated with the
                  matching security token; and
in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the
      first security token,

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including the second connection with said one or more corresponding connections.

~~creating a socket associated with the second connection and the first security token.~~

126. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 125, wherein
the connection associated with the matching security token is initiated by a second program.

127. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 125, wherein
the relay program relays data between the second connection and the connection associated with the matching security token.

128. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 121, wherein
a protocol daemon program does the creating the first connection, the creating the second connection, the receiving the first security token from the first program, the providing the first security token to the relay program, and the coupling the first connection to the second connection.

129. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 128, wherein
the protocol daemon program and the firewall program are resident on a single computer.

130. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 128, wherein
the protocol daemon program and the first program are resident on a single computer.

131. (**Currently Amended**) An apparatus comprising:
means for providing a plurality of sockets, wherein
each socket has an associated connection and an associated security token,
and
the associated security token is provided by the associated connection;
means for receiving a first connection and a first security token;

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means for creating a socket associated with the first connection, wherein the first connection has associated the first security token;

means for comparing the first security token with the associated security tokens;

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token, means for **including the socket in the plurality of sockets** ~~creating a socket associated with the first connection and the first security token~~.

132. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 131, wherein a security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

133. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of Claim 131 further comprising:

in response to said comparing, if the first security token and a security token associated with one of the plurality of sockets match, means for coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket **associated with the matching security token**.

134. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of Claim **131** ~~133~~ further comprising:

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token,

upon a determination that the first connection is not to be associated with a socket, means for disconnecting the first connection.

135. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133, wherein the means for coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:

means for relaying a data stream between the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

136. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133, wherein the means for coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:

means for creating a single connection comprising the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

137. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133 further comprising:

means for decoupling the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

138. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 137, wherein

the decoupling occurs upon one of failure and disconnect of one of the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

139. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133, wherein

the first connection is transmitted through a first firewall program.

140. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

means for creating a first connection to a first program;

means for receiving a first security token from the first program;

means for creating a second connection to a relay program;

means for providing the first security token to the relay program; and

means for coupling the first connection to the second connection upon successful creation of the second connection.

141. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140 further comprising

means for transmitting the second connection through a firewall program.

142. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140 further comprising:

means for relaying a data stream between the first connection and the second connection.

143. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140, wherein

the first security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

144. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140 further comprising:

means for terminating the first connection and the second connection.

145. **(Currently Amended)** The apparatus of Claim 140, wherein the relay program further comprises:

means for comparing the first security token with one or more security tokens associated with one or more corresponding connections;

means for coupling the second connection to a connection associated with a security token, if the first security token and the security token associated with the corresponding connection match; and

means for **including the second connection with said one or more corresponding connections** ~~creating a socket associated with the second connection and the first security token~~, **in response to** ~~if~~ none of the security tokens associated with the one or more corresponding connections match**ing** the first security token.

146. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of Claim 145, wherein

the connection associated with the matching security token is initiated by a second program.

147. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of Claim 145, wherein the relay program further comprises:

means for relaying data between the second connection and the connection associated with the matching security token.

148-164. **(Canceled)**

165. **(Currently Amended)** A computer program product encoded in computer readable media, the computer program product comprising:

a first set of instructions, executable by a processor and configured to cause the processor to provide a plurality of sockets, wherein

each socket has an associated connection and an associated security token**,**

and

the associated security token is provided by the associated connection;

a second set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause the processor to receive a first connection and a first security token;

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a third set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to

> **cause the processor to create a socket associated with the first**
>
> **connection, wherein**
>
> **the first connection has associated the first security token;**

a **fourth** ~~third~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to

> cause the processor to compare the first security token with the associated
>
> security tokens;

a **fifth** ~~fourth~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to

> cause the processor to **include the socket in the plurality of sockets**
>
> ~~create a socket associated with the first connection and the first~~
>
> ~~security token~~, in response to said comparing, if none of the associated
>
> security tokens match the first security token.

166. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 165, wherein a security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

167. (**Currently Amended**) The computer program product of Claim 165 further comprising:

> a **sixth** ~~fifth~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor, responsive to said
>
> comparing, and configured to cause the processor to couple the first
>
> connection to the connection associated with the socket **associated with**
>
> **the matching security token** if the first security token and a security
>
> token associated with one of the plurality of sockets match.

168. (**Currently Amended**) The computer program product of Claim **165** ~~167~~ further comprising:

> a **seventh** ~~sixth~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor, responsive to said
>
> comparing, and configured to cause the processor to disconnect the first
>
> connection,
>
> if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token, and
>
> upon a determination that the first connection is not to be associated with a
>
> > socket.

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169. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

an eighth ~~a seventh~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor and

configured to cause the processor to relay a data stream between the first

connection and the connection associated with the socket.

170. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

a ninth ~~an eighth~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured

to cause the processor to create a single connection comprising the first

connection and the connection associated with the socket.

171. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

a **tenth** ~~ninth~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to

cause the processor to decouple the first connection and the connection

associated with the socket.

172. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of Claim 171 further comprising:

an eleventh ~~a tenth~~ set of instructions, executable by the processor and

configured to cause the processor to decouple the first connection and the

connection associated with the socket upon one of failure and disconnect

of one of the first connection and the connection associated with the

socket.

173. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 167, wherein the first connection is transmitted through a first firewall program.

174. (Previously Presented) A computer program product encoded in computer readable media, the computer program product comprising:

a first set of instructions, executable by a first processor and configured to cause

the first processor to create a first connection to a first program;

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a second set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to receive a first security token from the first

program;

a third set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to create a second connection to a relay program;

a fourth set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to provide the first security token to the relay

program; and

a fifth set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to cause

the first processor to couple the first connection to the second connection

upon successful creation of the second connection.

175. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 174, wherein the second connection is transmitted through a firewall program.

176. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 174 further comprising:

a sixth set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to relay a data stream between the first connection

and the second connection.

177. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 174, wherein the first security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

178. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 174 further comprising:

a seventh set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to terminate the first connection and the second

connection.

179. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of Claim 174, wherein the relay program comprises:

> an eighth set of instructions, executable by a second processor and configured to cause the second processor to compare the first security token with one or more security tokens associated with one or more corresponding connections;

> a ninth set of instructions, executable by the second processor, responsive to said comparing, and configured to cause the second processor to couple the second connection to the connection associated with the matching security token if the first security token and a security token associated with a corresponding connection match; and

> a tenth set of instructions, executable by the second processor, responsive to said comparing, and configured to cause the second processor to **include the second connection with said one or more corresponding connections** ~~create a socket associated with the second connection and the first security token~~ if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token.

180. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 179, wherein the connection associated with the matching security token is initiated by a second program.

181. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 179, wherein the relay program further comprises:

> an eleventh set of instructions, executable by the second processor, configured to cause the second processor to relay data between the second connection and the connection associated with the matching security token.